

children that live a life of welfare and maybe a single parent the rest of their lives. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Nelson. Next speaker is Senator Hall. While, Senator Hall is working his way to his desk, I would introduce some guests of Senator Wickersham. We have under the north balcony, we have Ron Busch, the Mayor of Omaha...of Chadron, Omaha, Chadron, and John Wood from the Economic Development Office there. Would you please stand and be welcomed by the Legislature. Senator Hall.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members. I would just like to ask Senator Rasmussen a couple of questions, if she would respond, with regard to the amendment.

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Rasmussen, will you respond, please?

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: Yes.

SENATOR HALL: Senator Rasmussen, the issue of definition of counselor in Section 2 of the amendment, it lists the counselor shall mean licensed psychiatrist, psychologist, certified professional counselor, social worker, certified marriage and family therapist, down to ordained member of the clergy, and, (g), we get into licensed registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, licensed nurse practitioner, or, (j) licensed physicians assistant, could you explain, I guess, why those four categories were listed under counselor for purposes of this act, and I guess would you be receptive to an amendment that would strike those?

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: The reasons those were...well, first of all, let me share with you that this amendment is patterned after the 1990 law passed in Connecticut, and I raised that very same question about the definition of counselors, and one of the issues is to address the fact that there may not be counselors in all parts of Nebraska, and so it was trying to look for other kinds of professional health care people or professional mental health people who might be available in all communities that could fit and serve this need. Quite frankly, and I mentioned in my opening comments, that there are areas that I would like to see strengthened in this bill, and I think that is one of them; and that is that even somebody who is a certified counselor may not be qualified to do counseling regarding what to do with an unplanned pregnancy, and that one way to